I would like to conclude by pointing to a final facet of transitions—a feature that has to do with the peculiar moral psychology of those living through these great upheavals and is intimately connected to the questions of authority and fragility that Murphy raises. Citizens living under transitional regimes typically want their governments to accomplish myriad, mutually incompatible results. These include (but are not limited to) the institution of the rule of law, the punishment of past perpetrators, the establishment of a historical record of past wrongs, the public acknowledgment of victims, the restoration of safety and political stability, the achievement of administrative competence, the creation of jobs, the garnering of international legitimacy, and the attraction of foreign investments. These wishes are all dearly held, all legitimate, and yet, often, incompatible: trials are good at instituting the rule of law but less effective at acknowledging victims' suffering; administrative competence may require hiring rather than punishing past perpetrators; similarly, political stability and safety may require amnestying rather than punishing those associated with the previous regime; the historical record does not always benefit from the exclusionary tendency of the rules of evidence governing war crime trials. In short, another feature of transitional states—in addition to the four Murphy mentions—is that their citizens have deeply held, morally legitimate political expectations that contradict each other. How should a transitional government respond to its deeply conflicted citizenry? How do such conflicts impact a government's ability to deliver a just social transformation? Should such a government, in order to preserve its popular support, gauge which of these desires takes precedence among its citizens? How feasible is such gauging, given that these desires are likely to be in flux? On the other hand, can a transitional government, considering its fragility and the resulting unique need for public support, afford to ignore those political preferences? We have, it seems, arrived at the same question from a different direction: can democratization be accomplished democratically under conditions of extreme fragility? Or do transitional settings raise a special case of the problem of dirty hands—a case perhaps more forgivable than those that arise in settled contexts—because of the unique combination of the enormity of the stakes, the instability, and the absence of norms to guide political actors?

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"What are people really able to do and what kind of person are they able to be?" (9). This is the core focus of the capability approach, and it is clear why it has had so much appeal in a variety of disciplines and on a range of questions. Indeed, it has been used as a framework to study public health, technology, environmental policy, disability, and education, among others (17–18). For most political philosophers, however, the capability approach is primarily considered in just one of its many guises: as an approach to distributive justice. Specifically, it is seen as one

possible answer to the "equality of what?" question, or as an alternative distribuendum of justice. Deeming persons to be entitled to a bundle of resources without taking account of what they are able to do with them may seem unsatisfactory, as does focusing on the level of welfare this generates given how much this may be influenced by potentially unjust background conditions, contextual factors, and (potentially malformed) individual expectations. The appeal of the capability approach, therefore, lies in its focus on individuals' genuine opportunities (or capabilities) to perform functionings (to do or be certain things), regardless of how many resources this requires or how much welfare it generates. That is, distributive justice should be concerned with the kinds of lives people are able to lead and with ensuring that individuals have equal or sufficient opportunities to pursue certain courses of action (traveling, or voting, or caring for a child) or to achieve certain states of being (being healthy, or sheltered, or literate).

The contribution of capability theorists to this debate has been important and influential. Further, given the origin of the capability approach in Amartya Sen's 1979 Tanner lecture (entitled "Equality of What?") and the dominance of Martha Nussbaum's version of the capability approach (as a partial theory of justice), it is unsurprising that it is this iteration of the approach to which most philosophical attention has been paid. Yet this is not all the capability approach is, and Robeyns's excellent book forcefully disputes this narrow understanding of it. She argues that the capability approach is not a "precise theory" of justice or of anything else, but "a flexible and multipurpose framework" (24) which has been used to form the basis of various specific capability theories.

In the first of three substantive chapters, Robeyns gives a "helicopter view" of her modular understanding of the capability approach, outlining the elements that she deems essential to any capability theory and those that are to some degree optional. In the subsequent chapters she clarifies and expands on various elements of the capability approach and, finally, provides an overview of the criticisms that have been raised against it and assesses how damaging they are. Robeyns's primary goal here is not to develop and defend her own capability theory, but to "tame the proliferation of scholarship about the capability approach" (3). The overriding theme throughout is the central claim that the capability approach is a framework, not a theory, and that as such "the capability *approach* cannot, by its very nature, answer all the questions that should instead be put to particular capability *theories*" (30). The capability approach, then, is not a theory of justice, or an account of human development, or an approach to education policy, but specific capability theories might be any of these things, and many more.

Robeyns provides a clear and accessible account of the core debates that have long plagued the capability approach literature. She explains concisely the contributions that the capability approach has made in the many fields to which it has been applied, especially focusing on work in philosophy, economics, and political science. She ably demonstrates the instances in which scholars working in these different disciplines may be talking past each other, provides guidance on how these parallel literatures could be brought into clearer dialogue, and shows what there is to be gained from a more interdisciplinary approach. This book will prove a hugely useful resource for both scholars and students, whether they are new to the capability approach or versed in only one subset of the literature. I have no

doubt that this book will advance the study of the capability approach, clarify many conceptual and terminological misunderstandings, and, perhaps most importantly, defuse much misplaced criticism. Many critiques of the capability approach claim to have definitively identified the flaws in this approach when all they have really done is demonstrate problems with some particular capability theory, as Robeyns repeatedly shows.

There is, then, very much to admire. However, while the book no doubt fills a significant gap in the existing literature and does important work in bringing the many diverse threads of the capability approach together, this zoomed-out, "helicopter" perspective is not only the book's strength but also the source of its limitations. There are two related worries here: first, the speed with which Robeyns dispatches the various topics under discussion; and second, the focus on the capability approach, without a commitment to a capability theory, can sometimes seem evasive. This move allows Robeyns to neutralize many potential problems and criticisms, which simply "make no sense against the capability *approach* in general" (19). Yet it does not provide a satisfactory resolution to these putative criticisms, to which specific capability theories still need to provide an answer. These worries may not be entirely fair: Robeyns's goal, after all, is not to defend a capability theory but to clarify the conceptual terrain and lay out the criteria a future capability theory should meet. Nonetheless, there are times when a clearer sense of her own commitments and vision would be welcome.

Robeyns's main contribution is her modular understanding of the capability approach. Its goal is to demonstrate both the flexibility and the limitations of the capability framework. This is "the peculiar nature of the capability approach": on the one hand, it is "not exactly a precise *theory*," yet it also is "not something that can be anything one likes it to be" (75). Robeyns identifies three sets of modules: those which are compulsory (A), those which are compulsory with optional content (B), and those which are contingent on other choices or fully optional (C).

First, the "A-modules" are features that are necessary for a theory to be a genuine capability theory, as opposed to a hybrid account. These include the requirement that functionings and capabilities are core concepts in the approach (A1), that they form the evaluative space (A5), and that they are understood to be value neutral (A2). The things people can do or be and the real freedom to achieve them need not be good: some may be bad (the freedom to rape one's partner, to pollute the atmosphere, or to be illiterate), and some will be difficult to categorize. The status of some of these modules is more ambiguous. For example, A6 is the requirement that "*functionings and/or capabilities are not necessarily the only elements of ultimate value*" (53). Given that this allows for some flexibility regarding whether and which other dimensions of value are adopted, this may seem to fit more naturally as a B-module. Similarly, A3 requires acknowledging the existence of personal, social, and environmental conversion factors, which determine "how much functioning one can get out of a resource" (45). Again, given the various ways conversion factors can be understood, this might seem like another module that allows scope for choice regarding content. As such, it may be harder to draw firm lines between the modules than Robeyns implies.

The "B-modules" are "non-optional modules with optional content" (37). This means that a capability theory must address the issue raised by each of the

B-modules but can make various choices about their approach to it. For example, a capability theory must have an account of human diversity (B3), agency (B4), and structural constraints (B5) but need not be committed to one particular account. Equally, a capability theory must select which capabilities or functionings matter (B2) and whether the focus will be on the achievement of functionings, or access to capabilities, or both (B6), but the capability approach does not dictate the choices that should be made. Much will depend on the decision made in module B1 regarding the purpose, scope, and reach of the capability theory: for example, achieved functionings may be the appropriate metric when measuring an intervention designed to improve access to work and social networks among individuals with cognitive impairments, while individuals' access to opportunities may be more appropriate for an idealized theory of justice.

Finally, the "C-modules" are either contingent on a choice made in a B-module or else fully optional. These comprise the additional ontological and explanatory theories adopted (C1); how capabilities and functionings are prioritized, weighed, and aggregated (C2); the methods used for any empirical analysis (C3); and any additional normative principles or concerns (C4). For example, some capability theorists may insist that the relative weight of capabilities and functionings should depend on the outcome of a process of democratic decision-making (e.g., Sen), while others may weight them according to the degree to which they promote some further value, such as individual agency (e.g., Rutger Claassen). The approach taken may depend on choices made in the B-modules, such as the purpose of the approach, or the account of agency adopted.

Indeed, the answers to many of the questions Robeyns considers in the course of the book will depend on the goal and application of the specific capability theory. For example, should we promote functionings or capabilities? Are capabilities best understood as freedoms? What notion of well-being is used in the capability approach? Should we commit to a specific list of capabilities, and which should be included? Is the capability approach a liberal theory? Again, specific capability theories can take different views on these central questions, and most criticisms have purchase only against some specific capability theory. The capability approach is open on many issues: it is not a liberal theory, or libertarian, or perfectionist; it is not committed to promoting specific capabilities, or to promoting only capabilities and not functionings; it is not committed to a specific account of well-being, or to a particular empirical approach. As such, it can sidestep much critical comment. However, this does not solve capability theorists' problems: it demonstrates that critics should replace "the capability approach" with "this capability theory," but the criticisms will still have bite unless there is a capability theory that can avoid these worries yet still achieve the conceptual, descriptive, explanatory, evaluative, and normative (27–28) goals at which different applications of the capability approach aim.

Robeyns's discussion of Nussbaum's work illustrates the difficulty of identifying the appropriate target for criticism and the limitations of appealing to the distinction between capability approach and capability theory. Despite Nussbaum's own claims to the contrary, then, her account is not one of two capability approaches, alongside Sen's—after all, "there is *only one* capability approach" (79). Rather, it is a capability theory. Given this, some of Robeyn's criticisms of Nuss-

baum seem misplaced. For example, in a section considering whether the capability approach should only address the government, Robeyns points out that while Nussbaum sees it as essential to the capability approach "that it ascribes an urgent task to *government and public policy*" (179), there may be cases in which the capability approach could prove a useful tool though "the government is not involved at all" (180).

How deep does this criticism go? On the one hand, it may simply be a more specific instance of the complaint that Nussbaum wrongly names her capability theory "the capability approach." This is well grounded, but it hardly seems necessary to point out all the times Nussbaum's specific commitments are inessential to the broad capability framework. Even if supererogatory capability or functioning promotion is sometimes (or often) appropriately pursued by private groups or individuals, Nussbaum could still be right to suggest that the primary duty to meet the demands of justice falls on governments (with, of course, the caveat that if a government does not fulfill their obligations, secondary duties may fall on other actors). Thus, showing that the government is not the "primary agent of change" (183) in every application of the capability approach does not determine whether Nussbaum is right to make this claim in her capability theory of justice.

On the other hand, it might be this more specific claim—that governments are the primary agents of justice—which Robeyns is critiquing. This is not a debate I will enter here. However, it is worth noting, first, that Nussbaum does acknowledge the importance and impact of individual and community-led initiatives in promoting capabilities in numerous places in her work. Second, Robeyns's examples of capability promotion in which the government ought not to play a role—a community improving the quality of life in their neighborhood and parents deciding where to send their child to school—do not seem so obviously free of state involvement as she assumes. At the very least, it is surely appropriate for the state to determine the scope of acceptable choices in these domains: schools that do not teach basic literacy or numeracy, engage in corporal punishment, or attempt to indoctrinate children into some comprehensive doctrine may all be subject to legitimate state involvement, for example. However, the point is not to determine whether Robeyns is right about the appropriate scope of government action. Rather, it is to emphasize the importance of being clear about the nature of such critiques and to stress that just as criticisms of capability theories may not have bite against the capability approach, so is it unfair to criticize capability theories for making claims inessential to the capability approach.

I cannot, and so have not attempted to, provide a précis of all the topics Robeyns covers, or highlight all of the insights she provides. I will only conclude by saying that this is an impressive book, as well as a hugely useful resource, and should do much to improve future scholarship in this field.

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